



Springs are Hope Eternal

Recently this dry summer, I had reason to venture upon the wild hills above the family vineyard in Alexander Valley. With the fire of 2019 having swept through the area, it was easy to move quite freely due to the absence of matted poison oak, blackberries, manzanita, Madrone and various Oak species being burned out. I happened upon some of the ancient water springs on the northern hillside that once fed the house water since it was built in 1853. Spring boxes were constructed with mortared rocks which still allowed space for the water to collect and then be slowly fed to an underground cistern built for the house. I remember when I was a child, every second year we would cut away the lush vegetation that would grow up around these springs and bail out the sediment that had collected in them. When I was still the lightest of the family, I was lowered down legs up by my grandfather and father in order to scoop out the sediment into a larger bucket on a rope. Navigating centipedes and spiders that clung to rocks that made up the walls, gave special life to certain scenes from Indiana Jones movies to me some years afterward.

Walking the hills half a century later, I pondered redeveloping these natural water sources as a backup to our amazing modern well which requires electricity to function. Going back to the time before electricity was available, all you needed to supply the house with water was a source at higher elevation, gravity, hand digging tools, some mortar, rocks, pipe and some planning ahead. One of the things I wish I had asked my grandfather was more details about how he kept things dry enough for the mortar to set while still efficiently capturing the water.

As I carefully trod and slipped on the steep hillside through the new blackberries and horsetails that announce the springs presence, I grew hopeful about the future even during these trying times full of uncertainty and challenge. Despite the difficulties we may face in the world (pandemics, supply chain disruptions) and during a very dry year, these precious ancient water sources still remain a reliable touchstone to the past and to the ingenuity and resiliency of our ancestors. These springs have seeped their life-giving water in a modest but stalwart fashion during wet and dry years including the 1976/1977 drought which I witnessed first-hand. This is a very hopeful reminder during challenging times.

Putting the current rainfall season into perspective: In Santa Rosa (where rainfall amounts have been recorded for many years) average rainfall is about 32". The most severe recent drought (1975-1977) was two very dry years in a row. In 1975-1976 it rained about 15". The very next season, 1976-1977 was only 9-13" (depending on the source), less than one year's rainfall in two years. For the recent 2013-2014 season it was 14". This past season was 12.75". Looking further back, there was a long drought in 1928-1934 (with only one year making 75% of normal during that 6 season stretch). The [*following link*](#) shows monthly rainfall for Santa Rosa since the early 1900's. It is interesting how the total precipitation varied according to

month as well as by year. Yet a take home lesson of all this data is that we have survived and thrived under worse conditions. We will make it through 2021.

In the early 1900's, irrigation of vineyards in the area was essentially unheard of. The vines simply made do with what nature brought. It was possible at the time because the norm was planting in mostly well-drained sites using rootstocks capable of exploring the entire soil profile available. There were also less people reliant upon intercepting runoff moving toward the ocean as there are now. In recent years, vineyards have been established in areas not traditionally viable for this due to natural water availability and proneness to Spring frost. So now there are more competing interests for these liquid resources.

Stringing dry rainy seasons together is more significant than a single season, which is why the 1976-1977 drought was more troublesome than where we are at this point. This isn't the first time we have had a dry growing condition. Rootstock, the soil and variety grown will largely determine how successful the 2021 vintage is. I, for one, am very hopeful for a great one. The vines look great and are carrying an appropriate crop load for the situation... eternally hopeful, with good reason.

Cautiously, returning to visitors.

While we have had many requests for tasting appointments, we are unable to go back to our previous accommodations just yet. Since I am at the vineyard several days a week during the especially during the growing season, there is even less time right now at the winery to do essential production work and harder yet to carve out time from that for visitors. While California businesses have been opening up, we decided to wait for the uncertainty of Coronavirus variants, potential new waves of infection and resulting restrictions to settle out. Our plan at this point is to resume in November for our Open House. Pencil in the 19th to the 21st of November! In the meantime, Region, here in Sebastopol, is more properly configured to handle visitor flow and remains the easiest way to try some of our wines. And we'll be there in person the week of August 9 (see more below).

Curbside Winery Pickup. As always, please let us know when you'll be in the area and we'll do our best to meet you at the winery. Between Judi's schedule and mine, this has been more difficult this past year. The winery address is 4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol, 95472. If you get lost, the telephone number is 707-823-8980. Map is [here](#).

Region

Last year we became a part of [Region Wine Bar](#), a multi-winery tasting room at the edge of the City of Sebastopol in The Barlow complex. There are 25 local wineries with 2 wines each dispensed from high-tech WineStation machines on one side of the space all year long. The other side has a Wine Bar that each winery hosts for a week twice a year to pour whatever they choose. Hours are Sunday thru Wednesday 1 pm - 8 pm and Thursday thru Saturday 1 pm - 10 pm.

Scherrer will be featured the week of August 9-15. Judi or I will be on hand to help pour in the afternoons all week from 1 - 5 and would love to have a chance to connect in a socially responsible way. We will have different flights available during the week, a schedule will be

included on the Region [Events page](#) so check it out! There will be a **Winemaker Happy Hour** on Wednesday from 5-7. On Saturday August 14th from 5-7, I will be playing with good friend Michael Jordan (the Sommelier, not the basketball great) our **Unplugged and Uncorked** acoustic guitar duo. We will also have some of our growers of single vineyard bottlings there to talk about their operations and views on the many facets of what it takes to get wine from soil to bottle: Glen & Pamela Gunsalus (Friday 13th), Eric Flanagan (Platt, Saturday the 14th), Otis Holt (Calypso, Sunday the 15th). My mom will be there for a few hours one late afternoon as well.

Pickup at Region August 9-15. If you want to pick up any of your new or past orders when you're at Region, let us know in advance and we can have your wines ready. Again, **you'll need to let us know in advance** when you're planning on coming so we can have your wine packed up and ready as space is limited and the work required to move things in is huge.

Zinfandel Futures

The majority of the 2020 growing season was pretty much ideal if there is such a thing. Good well-spaced rainfall and reasonable temperatures during the season were heartening. Then in later August, lightning strikes started fires that caused much destruction and worry. In Napa and Sonoma counties there were two major fire complexes of concern and significant smoke affecting the crop on nearby vineyards. This overshadowed (literally and figuratively) the reality of some fantastic fruit being on vines, whether or not they experienced any significant smoke exposure. The net result is a large variation in the quality of wines from different vineyards. News stories usually paint pictures with a coarse broom rather than a fine brush. So don't be surprised to find some really great wines from 2020 that were not generally predicted or expected.

2020 Scherrer Vineyard 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel Futures

Based on my experiences with smoke uptake on a small lot of Pinot Noir in 2008 and the resulting success of the wine, I was quite hopeful that our fruit was minimally affected and well below threshold. Our vineyard's other major customer of grapes has extensive laboratory capability and found that 'smoke markers' were well below any level of concern. This agreed with my 'bucket fermentation' of samples ahead of harvest showing no sensory effect, giving me confidence that a given vineyard block was spared excessive exposure to fresh, reactive smoke volatiles.

So, how does the 2020 Old & Mature Zin taste? My good friend and long-ago helper at the winery, Don Bliss came up with the descriptor 'Mother Earth' for wines such as this. It has all the elements of nature: Flowers, fruits, soil, composting leaves, etc. Angles and rounds are balanced. Fruit and non-fruit are balanced as well. One is compelled to come back for another look at the very large mosaic whose themes meld into adjacent areas, visible according to where the light is shining at the time. We recently opened a 1.5 L of the [2012 Old Vine Centennial](#). This 2020 Old & Mature reminds me of that wine when at a similar stage. It's not quite as firmly structured and has the benefit of appropriate new French oak to support it. Nonetheless, it reminds me very much of that wine and vintage, overall. About 1,000 cases will be produced. *Estimated release price: \$40 per bottle. Futures price: \$296 per case to be released April 2022.*

2020 Scherrer Vineyard 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel Futures

I'll repeat what I wrote here last year for those who are new to us. This is a very small parcel on the family property where there is very little clay and the soil is more like fractured shale with a little silt. The Zin vines grow differently, and the wines are also very different. In 1996, the first vintage I vinified this area, I thought it would blend nicely with the Old and Mature vines growing in a soil containing more clay. This parcel was great alone but did not blend well. In the decades that followed, I have come to better understand the needs of this parcel and what it can become: This is a very unique Zinfandel that dresses up like Pinot Noir and actually looks pretty good that way.

Leaning into the somewhat earlier side of the window for harvesting has given us more high-toned perfume, cherries, plums and the lighter-colored stone fruits on the nose. This vintage has a ton of nectarine going on right now. On the palate, it settles into a more freshly tilled loam and gently heated grains thing with echoes of the stone fruit and a little sweet red beet. It seems to want to be a Pinot Noir, regardless of the vintage.

The 2020 vintage was smaller than 2019 so futures will go quickly. Because this has always been a limited production wine, there is usually not enough to go around. So, we have honored peoples' past support of this wine and give those that purchased Shale in the past (even just a bottle) 'first crack' and orders received by August 6 will be processed first in the order they are received while supplies last. Those who have not bought Shale before may place an order which will be placed on the 'wish list'. Those orders will be filled in the order they are received if there are futures still available after the first-crack August 6 deadline, though with the small harvest, though chances will be slimer this year.

And not to fear, we also hold back a small bit of the Shale from futures so we will have some available at release next April so those not in the 'first-crack' offering can have a few bottles. About 185 cases to be produced. *Release price \$40 /bottle. Futures price: \$296 per case to be released April 2022*

New Releases

New Release Sampler Pack

In our effort to bring the Open House tasting to you, we will be offering a special Sampler pack of one bottle of each of the following New Release wines at 15% discount and free ground shipping*. This offer is not on our regular public website. It is accessed only through [the link here](#) or the links provided on the email newsletter. You can also send in the attached order form or send us an email or give a call. 4 bottles, Special offer ~~\$216~~ \$186

**ground shipping will be weather dependent; if needed, we'll plan on storing the wine for you and ship when temperatures are wine friendly. If you are wanting your wine sooner, we are giving a special sampler discount of \$48 for 2-day air (Hawaii higher)*

Topless

You may have noticed some of our red wines in recent releases have capsules on them while others do not. While addressed before, I wanted to remind everyone that we discontinued using capsules a year ago when the supplier required 100% prepayment many months prior to delivery. During those uncertain times last spring for their winery customers, I felt disinclined to increase their cash flow to the detriment of ours. The capsule is the one part of

our packaging that is not truly essential and I saw no compelling reason to add cost any longer for the sake of tradition. We have since branded the ends of our corks with the 'S' logo to aid in identification in storage racks.

2018 Sonoma County Pinot Noir

2018 has proven to be an exceptional vintage in our area, from Chardonnay to Cabernet Sauvignon. Pinot Noir, in particular is showing grace, perfume and substance. This is our first release of our many 2018 Pinot Noir bottlings, which is achieving everything we could ever hope for regarding a vintage.

While almost entirely from Russian River Valley fruit, this speaks less clearly of that origin and borrowing words from Chuck Furuya, MS, simply exudes 'deliciousness.' Pretty red cherry with notes of dried cherries, rose hips, hibiscus and a hint of patchouli greet the nose. There is a seamless progression of the aromatics as well as how the wine unfolds on the palate with a very long finish and great continuity. We have been enjoying this with fresh local salmon. It is rather perverse that a winery's entry level wine is so satisfyingly in line with the 'fancier' bottlings. To me, the fancy stuff must show the signature of the area or specific site. However, no matter what, the wine must be delicious and compelling. 820 cases produced. *\$38 per bottle.*

2017 Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir

Subtlety and elegance are Pinot Noir's best qualities that separate it from nearly all other *Vitis vinifera* varieties. While from a very warm vintage (at harvest time, at least) that would normally tend toward a ponderous weight, due to good relationships with both the grower and another farming company who was able to lend a hand when timing was critical, we were able to harvest promptly on the upswing of temperatures before ponderous was ponderable. Good perfumes of hibiscus and fresh plum, which follows through to the finish and layers give way to an elegantly upholstered, comfy chair [*Oh no! Not the comfy chair!*] Plummy notes in the aromas as well as on the center palate are where the vintage signed the guestbook and are absolutely at home with the racy acidity and upward trajectory that are signatures of this vineyard block. The angles of acidity fit into the glove of texture perfectly. "The 2017 Pinot Noir Hallberg Vineyard is fabulous. Rich, pliant and super-expressive, the Hallberg is so satisfying. Plush contours and deep, layered fruit give the 2017 so much allure. Although the 2017 is incredibly appealing today, it also has the stuffing to age. 94 Pts. Antonio Galloni." 70 cases produced. *\$75 per bottle*

2016 Huntsman Red

In 2011, when I was first getting to know Grenache, we had a very cool growing season that was truncated by late September rains. As the Grenache from the Kick Ranch is on the cooler end of the spectrum for this variety, it was not possible for it to ripen to the normal level which would give it enough rounds to balance the acidic and tannic angles. Flavors were great but the wine needed a bit more flesh for its bones. I asked myself what do people who grow this grape in sometimes marginal seasons do? Enter the strategy from the Southern Rhone: Blending. I found that the Syrah already in-house accomplished this really well while adding some complimentary flavors. That vintage also found a tiny dribble of Zinfandel an asset, bringing a tad more fruit notes to the table. So after 4 years in barrel I bottled the first version of this, the 2011 Huntsman. In successive, fully ripe vintages I found that even though each variety could stand on its own merits, the blend was quite special and worthy of exploration. Tough or easy vintage, even in California, they belong together.

Cola, sandalwood and red beets. Very suave and seductive, it is difficult to leave the cork in the bottle for very long. It goes with so many foods: From Beef to salmon. I can't imagine a more versatile wine. It is right up there with our Zinfandel. 115 cases produced. *\$38 per bottle*

2017 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

As those who are familiar with our style of Cabernet Sauvignon, we aim for balance, nuance and age-worthiness. The 2017 vintage gave a nice plushness to enjoy at the very early stage of life along with some darker fruits on the back side of the palate. Drink it young, drink it old, either way, it will give great pleasure.

This can be used as a standard for the descriptor 'cassis.' 100% Cabernet Sauvignon seems to work very well on this site. My late dad's idea to plant this over 30 years ago, it has withstood the test of time and has yielded many classic, age-worthy wines. There's still red fruits and spicy, herbal tones and some black fruits lurking, but the subtle depth of this wine is like a limousine driver who doesn't push any pedal hard enough or swing the wheel abruptly enough to make the passengers feel like they are moving at all.

The winemaking for this has evolved from a slightly traditional gestalt to more of a Burgundian approach of no racking at all until bottling after three years in barrel. It suits the fruit well and I think the wines are better for it as we don't squander the material's long term oxygen appetite by handling in the open air. Those of us with grey hair may not appreciate the value of collecting young wines with tremendous life-expectancy at this point in life. But, I'm an optimist with deep wells (or springs) of hope. "The 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon Scherrer Vineyard is a gorgeous Alexander Valley wine. Dark wild cherry, menthol, licorice, chocolate, leather and dried herbs fill out the layers. Dark and brooding, the Scherrer Cabernet has so much going on. It's another fabulous showing from Fred Scherrer. Give the tannins a few years to soften. 94 pts. Antonio Galloni." 158 cases produced. *\$68 per bottle, \$36 half bottles, \$138 magnums*

Very Recent Releases

The 2015 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (\$50) has found its stride and appears to be running strongly for many more years. The 2016 Old & Mature Vine Zin (\$38) has reached that magical spot for our Zinfandels where baby fruit is playing in time with the latent perfumes that a few years in the bottle create. The Zinfandoodle 16.7 (\$22) is also giving exactly what it has to offer: Deliciousness and mystery.

The 2018 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay (\$50) is really beginning to shine as it enters the second year in bottle. Last year's release of 2015 Huntsman (\$34) has gotten a lot of re-orders as people have tried it on for size.

Again, thanks for your continued support. This past Spring it has meant more than ever to us. It allows us the creative freedom to do what we love and to support old and create potential new family legacies. As always, I am unable to fully communicate this in such a small space, but still try anyway.



Shipping Information

| We will be happy to ship your order to any of the following states when weather is wine friendly. | Case: 12 x 750 mL 24 x 375 mL 6 x 1.5 L | Per bottle (750 mL equivalent) |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Pick up is available during Winery Open House events or by appointment | NC | |
| GLS Delivery (recommended) to CA | \$21/box | \$1.75 |
| GLS 2-Day to AZ, ID, NV, OR, WA and parts of NM | \$24/box | \$2 |
| Ground to CA, AZ | \$30/box | \$2.5 |
| Ground to CO, ID, OR, MT, NM, NV, WA or WY | \$36/box | \$3 |
| Ground to AL, DC, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA or WI | \$48/box | \$4 |
| 2-day Air to above states plus: HI & Alaska higher | \$120/box | \$10 |
| Overnight to any above state. Delivery to any state address with liquor license. HI or Alaska higher | \$168/box | \$14 |

WARNING: Drinking distilled spirits, beer, coolers, wine and other alcoholic beverages may increase cancer risk, and, during pregnancy, can cause birth defects. For more information go to www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/alcohol.

| MAILING | SHIPPING | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Name | Name | |
| Street | Company Name | Residential <input type="checkbox"/> |
| City, State, Zip Code | Street | |
| Daytime Phone | City, State, Zip Code | |
| e-mail: | Delivery Phone | |
| I am over 21. Date of Birth: | Shipping Notes | |

| Futures Wine - Released April 2022 | Price (cases only) | Quantity | Amount |
|--|--------------------|----------|----------------------|
| 2020 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel | \$296 / case | | |
| 2020 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel | \$296 limit 1 case | | |
| 2020 Zin Half & Half Split Case (6-OMV, 6-Shale) | \$296 limit 1 case | | |
| Futures Subtotal | | | |
| Sales Tax: Pick up 8.5% Shipping: AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WY | | | % |
| Choose: <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up at Winery or <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping method and cost: | | | |
| Deadlines: August 6 for Shale First Crack August 31 for all futures orders unless sold out | | | Futures Total |

| New Releases | Price | Quantity | Amount |
|--|----------------------|----------|--------|
| 2018 Sonoma County Pinot Noir | \$38 / bottle | | |
| 2016 Huntsman Red Wine | \$38 / bottle | | |
| 2017 Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir | \$75 / bottle | | |
| 2017 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon | \$68 / bottle | | |
| | \$36 / half bottle | | |
| | \$138 / magnum | | |
| New Release Sampler (one each 750 mL, 15% discount) | \$186/ 4 bottle pack | | |
| Current Wines Subtotal | | | |
| Discount for orders that will total 12 or more bottles (Futures & New Release Sampler build toward discount but are not additionally discounted) | | -10% | < > |
| Current Wines Total | | | |
| Sales Tax: Pick up 8.5% Shipping: AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WY | | | |
| Choose: <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up at Winery or <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping method and cost: | | | |

Total
 Payment: Visa / MasterCard American Express Check

| | | |
|------------|----------|---------------|
| Card # | Expires: | Security Code |
| Signature: | | Date: |